

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in light of the amendment and the following remarks.

The Applicants wish to acknowledge the courtesy and effort extended by the Examiner in conducting telephonic interviews with Applicants' attorney, Louis J. DelJuidice.

Status of the Claims

Claims 7-11, 14, 15, and 20 are pending in the application. Claims 1-6, 12, 13, and 16-19 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Claim 20 is now submitted for examination and no new matter is added.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,020,884 to MacNaughton et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,487,584 to Bunney. Claims 1-6, 12, 13, and 16-19 are cancelled by this amendment, thus rendering the rejection to these claims moot.

The Examiner contends that MacNaughton discloses a method for facilitating a chat session between a first user and a second user, both visiting a first web server, the method comprising receiving from the first and second users, a first and second user ID

corresponding respectively to each user and an address of the first web server; providing to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID; receiving from the first user, a request to open a chat session with the second user; receiving and transmitting, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested a chat session; and receiving from the second user, an acceptance to enter the chat session designated by the first user. The Examiner acknowledges that MacNaughton does not disclose a semi-public chat room, however, the Examiner contends that Bunney discloses chat sessions between users in public or semi-private discussion groups.

Applicants disagree with the Examiner and submit that MacNaughton discloses dedicated Community Home Pages which are predetermined and associated with particular web sites (MacNaughton, column 6, lines 35-61). The Home Pages disclosed in MacNaughton cannot be designated by the user. Further, MacNaughton discloses that for a user to change a Home Page, the user must leave their current community and enter a different community. Additionally, MacNaughton discloses transmitting information regarding activity on the Home Page to users upon entering the community (MacNaughton, column 9, lines 34-38).

Bunney discloses a communication network wherein users can have multiple identities. Bunney discloses that these multiple identities are associated with a single user, and further permits the user to create a home page by answering a series of questions with various templates made available to make it easy for the user to create their home page. The home page contains a profile for each identity. (Bunney, column 3, lines 29-40).

The combination of MacNaughton with Bunney results in a communication system which permits users to have multiple identities and permits each identity to create a home page which contains a profile of the identity. Thus, a user of the system created by combining these

patents would only be able to access profile information on other users by visiting a web site created by the other users. This is different from the method of independent claim 7, which comprises "receiving, from the user, a designation of the first web site as a homepage, wherein the homepage is any web site on a communication network."

Method claim 7 of the present application provides usage information on a first website and recites "receiving, from the user, a designation of a first web site as a homepage, wherein the homepage is any web site on a communication network." Applicants respectfully state that the references cited by the Examiner do not disclose the user designating any web site as a homepage. The Home Pages disclosed in MacNaughton are predetermined and can not be designated by the user. The home pages created under Bunney are merely informative of the user's profile to other users.

Additionally, claim 7 further recites "transmitting data representative of the usage to the user when the user is connected to a communication network." While MacNaughton discloses sending notifications reflecting the state of a homepage to users who just entered the community's web site, the invention of claim 7 transmits usage data to the user as long as the user is connected to a communication network. A communication network may be the Internet or world-wide web, but may also apply to other systems such as a BBS system, a local-area network, a wide-area network, an intranet system, and the like. These communication networks are not disclosed or suggested in MacNaughton or Bunney.

Applicants respectfully submit that for the foregoing reasons the combination of MacNaughton and Bunney does not result in the method of claim 7. Also, neither MacNaughton or Bunney singly, or in combination, disclose or suggest the invention of

claim 7. Therefore, Applicants request withdrawal and reconsideration of this rejection. Claims 8-11 depend from claim 7.

Claim 14 relates to a computer-readable medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing a method for providing usage information of a first web site designated by a user, and claim 15 relates to apparatus for providing usage information of a first web site designated by a user. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 14 and 15 are patentable over the combination of MacNaughton and Bunney for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 7. Therefore, Applicants request that these rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

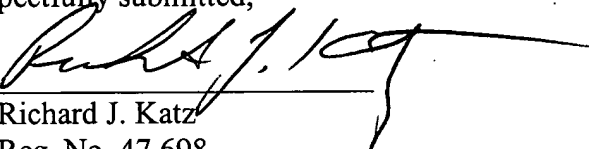
Each and every point raised in the Office Action dated December 11, 2002 has been addressed on the basis of the above amendments and remarks. In view of the foregoing, it is believed that claims 7-11 and 20 are in condition for allowance and it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered and that all pending claims be allowed and the case passed to issue.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

Dated: June 11, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

By



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